



Florida House of Representatives
Democratic Office

Franklin Sands
Democratic Leader

Geraldine F. Thompson
Democratic Leader Pro Tempore

April 6, 2009

The Honorable Larry Cretul
Speaker of the House
Florida House of Representatives
420 The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Dear Speaker Cretul:

Big business is winning again, Floridians are losing, and this is due in large part to Florida House Republicans' apparent lack of interest in renewable green energy.

At a time when nearly everyone, including most of the world leaders who met in Great Britain last week, is embracing the idea of a cleaner, greener way of life and the positive impact that a substantive energy policy will have on Florida's struggling economy, Florida's Republican Leadership has been unable to make any substantive decisions on what to do, how to do it, and when it should be done. Worse, they're not allowing anyone who has a good "green idea" to have it properly considered during the current legislative session. We respectfully request you give our bills an expeditious hearing.

Although Governor Charlie Crist has been a leader in the fight for renewable energies, partnering with House Democrats with the goal of reducing our state's dependence on foreign oil and dirty coal, we see no such commitment from House Republican leadership. It seems the leadership is ignoring the issue, even the pleas of your own Energy & Utilities Policy Committee Chairman, Paige Kregel.

The result is shameful: After months of committee meetings and four weeks of session, the

Florida House of Representatives has no energy package. None. The impression in any thinking Floridian's mind is that we are ignoring not just initiatives that will directly benefit Florida, but ignoring a worldwide movement, and firmly embracing an obsolete status quo. With no energy policy, we risk losing badly needed federal economic recovery dollars which could spur an explosive growth in green technologies here in Florida.

Rep. Rick Kriseman, the Ranking Democrat on the Energy & Utilities Policy Committee, has said that "at a time when most states are moving forward with innovative policies, such as feed-in tariff, and are making real progress in adhering to a true renewable portfolio standard, Florida appears to be stuck on the proverbial sandbar.

"Even in the Senate, where at least SOME energy policy is being considered," Rep. Kriseman said, "the opportunity to create and invest in renewable energy is being diminished by a "clean energy" standard which includes nuclear power and coal gassification."

Both Representative Kriseman and I, along with the members of our Caucus, are disappointed that our colleagues in leadership positions are not only compromising our state's renewable energy goals, but are rejecting the entrepreneurial promise of a green collar Florida.

It has been nearly a generation since Florida's unemployment rate has been this high -- more than 250,000 jobs have been lost in the past year alone, and statistics show close to a million Floridians are unemployed -- yet the Republican leadership seemingly shows no sense of urgency. Florida's job market could vastly improve with the passage of a strong energy bill.

It's not too late.

Along with Rep. Rick Kriseman and House Democrats, I respectfully call upon you and your colleagues to join us and act quickly to make Florida a leader in innovative energy policy.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'F. Sands', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Franklin Sands
House Democratic Leader